



Information Request Procedure and Fees

Information Requests

Patterned after the Federal Freedom of Information Act, the Montgomery County Executive Regulation #27-01AM under the Maryland Public Information Act ('MPIA') allows requesters to review and or receive copies of documents maintained by the Department Permitting Services (DPS). The Department of Permitting Services maintains permit-related drawings and records, excluding records for City of Rockville and City of Gaithersburg. The department's records include documents that were submitted for permit processing and it may not be comprehensive. It is to be noted that the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) does not have any records available prior to October 17, 1986 except for Well & Septic records which date back to 1943. However, DPS does not have records available for every well and/or septic system in Montgomery County.

The following are the Department of Permitting Services set procedures and fees.

A. Procedures

Department of Permitting Services (DPS) has established the following process for recording, researching and delivering the requested information or materials. DPS identifies and tracks all the MPIA requests in the department's database (Hanson) from receipt to response. As outlined in MPIA the requester's right to access information is limited by numerous restrictions cited throughout the MPIA. The Maryland Public Information Act Manual is available for review at: <http://www.oag.state.md.us/Opengov/pia.htm>. MPIA allows the requestor to inspect the existing records in its available format and it does not require the department to create customized records. DPS will fulfill information requests from existing records only. No customized records will be generated to fulfill a public information request. DPS sends a response to the requester within the processing time frame as listed below to inform the requester whether the request is granted in full; denied in part; or denied in full. Additionally due to the volume or content of records requested, an extension may be granted for the time to respond. All responses are recorded in DPS' tracking database.

- 1) **Submittal process** – Written request using the DPS information request Form will materially assist the department in responding to a request. To best accommodate please submit information request Form by selecting one of the following methods:
 - a) To submit the Form electronically, click: <http://permittingservices.montgomerycountymd.gov/>
Or Visit DPS website and click on [Submit an Information Request](#)
 - b) To download a hard copy of the Form visit DPS website at:
<http://permittingservices.montgomerycountymd.gov/permitting/docs/RequestforInformation.pdf>
 - c) To submit the downloaded Form, complete (type/print) the Form and submit it by:
 - i) Mail to: DPS-CM/CI 255 Rockville Pike, 2nd Floor Rockville, Maryland 20850
 - ii) Fax to: 240-777-6262
 - iii) Walk-in to: Visit the DPS office to drop the Form at the front counter or request to see DPS Customer Service Permit Technician for assistance.
 - iv) Call 311 or 240-777-0311: To speak with a Customer Service Representative for assistance.
 - v) No email: To ensure timely processing, DPS procedures exclude information request Form submittal through DPS staff personal emails as personal may be out of the office.

- 2) **Document Review Schedule** – Requests to review documents at DPS offices will be scheduled by appointment only. Requesters shall call 311 in Montgomery County and 240-777-0311 outside of Montgomery County to schedule an appointment with DPS Customer Service Permit Technicians. Appointments will be scheduled during DPS business hours (weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)
- 3) **Processing Time** – Processing time for information requests varies according to workload or the complexity of the request. Most requests are processed in no more than ten workdays; many can be processed on the day of the request. The MPIA provides a thirty-day response period for information requests. Additionally due to the volume or content of records requested, an extension may be granted for the time to respond with the requestors consent.
- 4) **Delivery** – At the customer's request materials will be mailed to or picked up by the customer. If requested information or materials are not picked up or reviewed within two weeks of notification then the request will be cancelled and it will be noted in the DPS's database.

B. Fees

The Following schedule governs the fees for processing information request. The Executive may amend these fees by regulations issued under method 3. Before responding to a request DPS's Permit Technician will estimate the search, preparation and reproduction costs and either obtain the written agreement of the applicant to pay the cost or demand prepayment of the estimated fee prior to processing the request. Payment shall be made by cash (hand delivered), check or money order made payable to Montgomery County.

- 1) **Staff Time** - There will be no charges for the first two hours of combined staff time. Charges related to staff time researching, retrieving and reproducing materials include:
Staff time of forty eight dollars per hour (\$48/hour)
- 2) **Photocopying and Reproductions** –
 - a) Letter and Legal sizes (not to exceed 8.5x14 inches) and paper faxes are \$0.15 per page or each side.
 - b) Large size document (not to exceed 11x17 inches) and Microfilm or Microfiche reproductions are \$1.00 per page or each side.
 - c) Photocopying large size plans (plans larger than 8.5x14 inches) are \$2.00 per page or each side.
 - d) Upon request information can be produced onto a CD. Microfiche records can only be photocopied and can not be placed on CD.
 - e) If records are not susceptible to photocopying (for example, punch cards, magnetic tapes, blueprints, and microfilm), the fee for copies must be based on the actual cost of reproduction.
- 3) **Certified Copies** – Written certifications that copies are true copies of DPS are \$1.00 per page or each side.
- 4) **Material Delivery Fees** – Mailing the materials are the actual costs of postages. DPS can only fax the letter (8.5x11) size pages all other sizes of requested hard copies shall be mailed or picked up by requester.